

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 EB-07 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-07 COME-00
MCT-01 SY-05 NEA-10 /089 W
-----008387 112041Z /63

R 111610Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5796
INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL PALERMO

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PINS, IT
SUBJECT: VIOLENCE TAERS OFF AS SUMMER BEGINS

REF: (A) ROME 9149: (B) ROME 8371

SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH POLITICALLY MOTIVATED SHOOTINGS, BOMBINGS
AND OTHER ACTS OF TERRORISM CONTINUE TO OCCUR, THE
RATE OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE HAS GENERALLY SLOWED THROUGHOUT
THE MONTH OF JUNE AND IN THE FIRST DAYS OF JULY. THE
DECLINE MAY BE ATTRIBUTED IN PART TO THE ARRIVAL OF THE HOT
WEATHER AND THE CLOSING OF THE UNIVERSITIES FOR THE
SUMMER, BUT IT IS ALSO LIKELY THAT RECENT PLICE SUCCESSES
AGAINST TERRORIST GROUPS OF BOTH THE LEFT AND THE RIGHT HAVE
MADE THE PERPETRATORS OF THE VIOLENCE MORE CAUTIOUS. END
SUMMARY

1. POLITICAL VIOLENCE CONITNUED IN ITALY THOUGHT THE
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MONTH OF JUNE AND IN EARLY JULY, ALBEIT AT A SOMEWHAT
REDUCED RATE. THE MOST SPECTACULAR INCIDENTS DURING THIS
PERIOD HAVE BEEN A SERIES OF SHOOTING ATTACKS ON JOURNALISTS
(SEE REF AL) AND MIDDLE-LEVEL INDUSTRIAL EXECUTIVES. ALSO
WOUNDED WERE THE DC VICE PROVINCIAL SEVERETARY FROM
PISTOIA (JUNE 22), THE DEAN OF THE ECONOMICS FACULTY AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF ROME (JUNE 21), AND TWO POLICEMEN

GUARDING THE HOME OF A PROMINENT MAGISTRATE (JUNE 12). IN EACH CASE THE VICTIMS WERE APPROACHED ON THE STREET BY TWO OR THREE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO PRODUCED PISTOLS AND SHOT THEIR VICTIMS REPEATEDLY IN THE LEGS. THERE HAVE BEEN 15 SUCH ATTACKS IN THE PAST SIX WEEKS, THE LARGEST NUMBER OCCURRING AT THE TIME OF THE TRIAL OF RENATO CURCIO, FOUNDER OF THE "RED BRIGADES", AND APPARENTLY AIMED AT INTIMIDATING PARTICIPANTS IN THE TRIAL. CURCIO WAS CONVICTED AND SENTENCED TO SEVEN YEARS IN PRISON ON JUNE 23.

3. IN ADDITION TO THE SHOOTINGS, FIRE-BOMB ATTACKS ON PROPERTY HAVE CONTINUED TO OCCUR. ALTHOUGH BUILDINGS BELONGING TO THE PCI AND OTHER LEFTIST GROUPS HAVE BEEN ATTACKED ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS, BY FAR THE MOST FREQUENT TARGETS HAVE BEEN THE PROPERTY OF CENTER AND RIGHT WING POLITICAL PARTIES AND LARGE BUSINESS CONCERNS. LOCAL DC HEADQUARTERS AND THE AUTOMOBILES OF DC OFFICIALS AND BUSINESSMEN HAVE BEEN TARGETS PARTICULARLY FAVORED FOR FIRE BOMBINGS, BUT THE MOST SERIOUS PROPERTY DAMAGE OCCURRED IN MILAN ON JUNE 19 WHEN YOUTHS WEARING CARABINIERE UNIFORMS SET FIRES IN TWO WAREHOUSES WHICH DESTROYED PROPERTY WORTH MORE THAN 50 BILLION LIRE (56 MILLION DOLLARS).

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3. CREDIT FOR MOST OF THE SHOOTINGS AND BOMBINGS HAS BEEN CLAIMED EITHER BY THE "RED BRIGADES", THE "ARMED PROLETARIAN NUCLEI" (NAP), THE "COMBATANTS FOR COMMUNISM", OR THE "COMMUNIST FRONT LINE" ORGANIZATION. ON OCCASION, TWO OR MORE OF THESE LEFTIST TERRORIST GROUPS HAVE CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SAME ASSAULT, AND IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE FOUR ARE AT LEAST LOOSELY LINKED.

4. POLICE HAVE SCORED A NUMBER OF SUCCESSES AGAINST THE TERRORISTS IN RECENT WEEKS, THE MOST NOTABLE OF WHICH OCCURRED IN ROME ON JULY 1 WHEN CARABINIERI KILLED NAP LEADER ANTONIO LO MUSCIO IN A SHOOTOUT AND CAPTURED TWO OF HIS MOST NOTORIOUS ACCOMPLICES, FRANCA SALERNO AND MARIA PIA VIANALE, BOTH OF WHOM HAD ESCAPED FROM A WOMEN'S DETENTION CENTER NEAR NAPLES OVER SIX MONTHS AGO. IN ADDITION, POLICE AND CARABINIERI HAVE BROKEN THE MOST DANGEROUS RIGHTWING TERRORIST GROUPS OVER RECENT MONTHS AND AT PRESENT THE OVERSHELMING MAJORITY OF TERRORIST ACTIVITY COMES FROM THE FAR LEFT.

5. COMMENT: UNDOUBTEDLY THE ARRIVAL OF HOT WEATHER

AND THE CLOSING OF UNIVERSITIES FOR SUMMER VACATION
HAVE CONTRIBUTED SUBSTANTIALLY TO THE DECLINE IN THE
INCIDENCE OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE THROUGH JUNE AND EARLY
JULY: HOWEVER, IT IS PROBABLY THAT ACTION BY THE GOVERNMENT
AND POLICE HAS ALSO HAD ITS EFFECT. INTERIOR MINISTER
COSSIGA'S SUCCESS IN MAINTAINING HIS BAN ON DEMONSTRATIONS
IN THE CITY OF ROME THROUGH THE MONTH OF MAY
(SEE REF B) UPSET THE MOMENTUM OF ESCALATING STUDENT
VIOLENCE, WHILE RECENT POLICE SUCCESSES HAVE MADE THE
MORE "PROFESSIONAL/ TERRORISTS MORE CAUTIOUS. HOWEVER,
A HARD CORE OF DETERMINED, SKILLED, AND APPARENTLY
WELL-FINANCED POLITICAL CRIMINALS REMAINS ACTIVE IN
MOST OF ITALY'S MAJOR CITIESGARDNER

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